

# EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



## OFFICE ON LATINO AFFAIRS

### ANNUAL REPORT – FISCAL YEAR 2004

#### Executive Summary

*Submitted by: Gustavo Velasquez, Director*

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#### **I. Introduction.**

The mission of the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs (OLA) is to improve the quality of life of the District's Latino population by providing community-based grants, advocacy, community relations and outreach services to residents so they can have access to a full range of health, education, housing, economic development and employment services.

OLA's role and work are critical in the infrastructure of DC Government as the District's Latino community –the largest and fastest growing ethnic group in Washington, D.C. and metro area- still faces many challenges to advancement and opportunities, including but not limited to lack of government information, as well as deficiencies in the design of programs and services that can effectively address the linguistic and cultural needs of many Latino immigrants. The Mayor, Council and District government entities continue relying on OLA's expertise to understand the challenges of this community, and consult with us to better serve this constituency as they become immersed in the American society.

October 1<sup>st</sup> 2003 marked not only a new fiscal year for OLA, but also the first day of appointment for Gustavo Velasquez after a long search process conducted by members of the Latino community. Within three months into FY2004, OLA had reduced to 50% its vacancy rate, from 3 staff on October 1<sup>st</sup> to half of its 12 budgeted full-time equivalents (FTEs) in January. By mid-February OLA had only 2 vacancies. As new talent was brought on board, OLA Director worked during the first quarter of the fiscal year towards a new Strategic Business Plan. Approved in January, this Strategic Plan defined a new administrative and programmatic structure, functional job descriptions, reallocation of funds by strategic areas, and most importantly, a complete new set of accountability and performance measures closer to the reality of OLA's capabilities.

Below is a summary of activities and accomplishments during the first year of implementation of OLA's new strategic business plan:

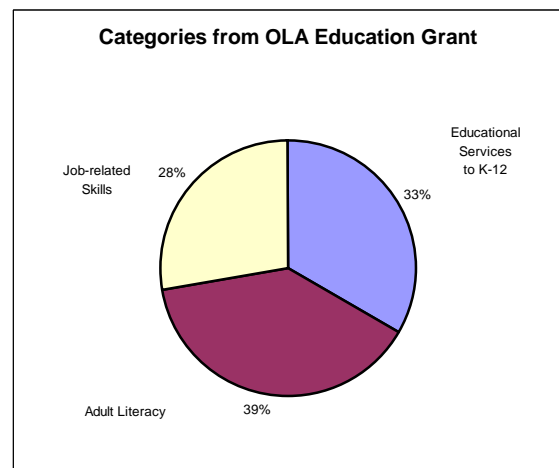
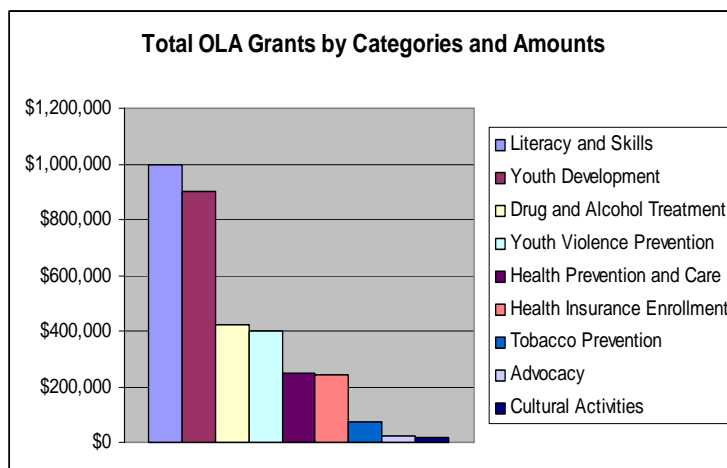
#### **II. Community-based Grants Program**

This program provides financial resources, technical assistance and grants management services to non-profit community organizations so that they improve their abilities, set of skills, performance and quality of programs offered to Latinos and other disadvantaged District residents.

**Grants Administration:** During FY2004 OLA reformed with depth its Grants Program by strengthening the awarding methodology and developing stronger monitoring mechanisms. The ultimate goal of OLA's Grants Program is to ensure that, while community organizations continue building their capacity aimed at quality programs, they deliver the intended contractual goals and prove that outcomes are met for their clients. As a result of an improved administration of funding, and the excellent work of OLA's community partners, this program had a great effect in the Latino community this year. This effect is measured by increased efficiency of grants management, satisfaction of grantees for services provided by OLA, and improved community outcomes. The investment during FY2004 totaled **\$3,553,700**, an increase of 11.5% from 2003. It is estimated that over **4,000** unduplicated people were served through OLA's grants:

Funding category	# of unduplicated constituents served (est.)
Literacy and Skills	1,236
Drug and Alcohol Treatment	383
Youth Development	704
Youth Violence Prevention	378
Health Prevention and Care	800
Health Insurance Enrollment	500
Tobacco Prevention	N.A.
Advocacy	N.A.
Cultural Activities	4,600

Below is an illustrative summary of OLA grant awards this year. Information and outcomes for each individual program is available in the "grants" section at [www.ola.dc.gov](http://www.ola.dc.gov).



OLA conducted two competitive award processes in FY2004: one for \$1million in the strategic area of education and family literacy, and a second for \$425,000 to address the long standing gap of substance abuse awareness and inpatient treatment services for Latino adults. Both activities led to funding for 21 community organizations, ranging from \$32,000 to \$350,000 individual awards. For the first time ever OLA provided support in the amount of \$100,000 in the area of tobacco prevention and tobacco purchase compliance. Funding was provided by the Health Department and efforts were primarily youth-targeted.

OLA also approved funding in new areas of civic engagement and advocacy, Latino cultural activities, and a new \$400,000 investment in gang prevention and intervention strategies to address the growing youth violence situation that escalated during the summer and fall of 2003. The Latino Gang Prevention and Intervention program benefited more than 250 youth across the community and funded a dozen

organizations operating in different fronts, such as community schools, parks and recreation centers, CBOs and the Oak Hill juvenile detention facility. This new program complemented on-going activities funded by OLA under PRO-Urban Youth, an all-summer stream of funding in its third year of operations for youth employment and other engaging and productive activities.

OLA also provided continuation funding for its health-focused programs. This investment reached \$800,000 this year in areas of awareness, insurance enrollment, prevention and education of chronic diseases, and health care operating support.

***Technical Assistance and Information to Non-Profits:*** In this area, OLA was very active in securing the participation of over 30 community organizations in two important events. The first Funding Development Roundtable, conducted on June 8, was organized to provide an overview of the District's 2005 Budget, and help CBO leaders understand how some components of the budget will be channeled through the Office of Partnerships and Grants Development and SERVE DC. On September 7, organizations came together once again at OLA to learn about opportunities offered by a number of local foundations, including Fannie Mae, Cafritz Foundation, Washington Post Foundation and the Meyer Foundation. Furthermore, OLA staff helped CBOs numerous times with the process of securing compliance with program deliverables and reporting. Throughout this process OLA learned that over 80% of its grantees are entities with extremely limited program and agency management capacity. This underscores the need to strengthen this functional area in the years ahead.

### **III. Advocacy and Language Access Program**

The Advocacy and Language Access Program (ALAP), created under OLA's new business strategic plan, began to provide technical support, compliance-monitoring, task delivery assistance, linguistic advice, and problem-solving services to District governmental agencies, so that DC Latino residents may be better informed and represented, as well as able to access a full range of health, education, housing, economic development, and employment services, through the adequate implementation, initially, of the Mayor's Limited English Proficient (LEP) Initiative and, as of April 2004, of the new Language Access Act (LAA).

Recognizing that greater access to local governmental programs could have the potential of markedly improving the quality of life of LEP populations throughout the District of Columbia, particularly those of Latino families, seniors, and children, the ALAP has been furnishing guidance to DC governmental agencies, facilitating linkages with CBOs, and seeking to ensure that District services are delivered in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. By doing so, OLA has been trying to improve the effectiveness of DC governmental deliverables that should, in due time, increase the quality and volume of vital services received by the more than 50,000 Latinos living and working in the city.

Beyond language access matters, the OLA has also been working to address some other pressing issues for District Latinos, such as employment and community-police relations, through its active participation in the DC Workforce Investment Council (DCWIC) and MPD's Latino Advisory Council, respectively. Moreover, OLA, in conjunction with the Office of Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA), has been very recently helping the DC Housing Authority (DCHA) remove some of the barriers to housing choice faced by LEP populations.

**Language Access:** Latinos, who represent the largest share of LEP individuals in the city, will ultimately be affected by how well DC government delivers on the objectives of the new LAA (i.e. translating vital documents, providing oral language services, hiring bilingual public contact personnel, training DC employees in multicultural awareness, and performing outreach activities that are tailored for LEP constituents). Given this, the ALAP has been offering a range of technical and linguistic support to the participating DC agencies. OLA has worked closely with the Office of Human Rights (OHR) and OAPIA to improve the level of coordination and know-how sharing among the DC offices charged with monitoring the implementation of the Act.

Language access is not only about translating forms or brochures. It is about providing our LEP residents with equal access to local government services--equal to the services offered to English speakers. After all, the Act states that access means “to be informed of, participate in, and benefit from public services, programs, and activities offered by a covered entity at a level equal to English proficient individuals.”

Some of the most important highlights for FY2004 under the area of Language Access are the following:

- ☑ Monitored and delivered technical support to the 17 agencies under the Mayor’s LEP Initiative by enforcing the Latino Community Development Act and the Bilingual Services Translation Act, as well as the Mayor’s memorandum of FY2000 on servicing LEP residents. Once the LAA was ratified, the above-mentioned services were extended to the six additional agencies that were added to ALAP’s monitoring load;
- ☑ Streamlined the responsibilities of LEP coordinators by developing a joint-reporting mechanism. These fundamental monitoring documents, together with the development of a comprehensive baseline assessment format, have served as the basis for the LAA’s reporting structure that is being utilized by the new Language Access Program;
- ☑ Enhanced the multicultural recruiting capacity by creating within DCOP’s website a place to post all bilingual job opportunities generated by DC government;
- ☑ Support bilingual hiring efforts with particular agencies (e.g. connect entities such as the Department of Mental Health and others with Spanish press and media);
- ☑ Improved OLA’s Spanish translation/interpretation protocols and quality control capabilities in order to better support DC agencies in their Spanish language access efforts. In this regard, OLA hired a highly qualified and experienced Spanish translator/interpreter;
- ☑ Provided translation/interpretation services to 25 different departments or offices of the Government of the District of Columbia. This resulted in a total of 87 translations/interpretations, from English to Spanish, of texts and oral presentations in a variety of subject areas, including health, emergency services, housing, and education;
- ☑ Participated in the DC government fact-finding mission that traveled to San Francisco and Oakland to review the best-practices relevant for the effective implementation of language access legislation. OHR and OAPIA were also represented;
- ☑ Organized, in partnership with The Brookings Institution, OHR, and OAPIA, the Mayor’s Forum on the New Language Access Act. It attracted the participation of national and regional experts in the field of the provisioning of services to LEP communities;
- ☑ Cooperated in the drafting and development of a new contracting and procurement facility that should ensure that DC agencies can acquire the services of cost-effective and highly qualified translation/interpretation vendors;

- ☑ Compiled a list of Spanish interpreters so that “last-minute” or emergency interpretation needs can be met by the different agencies operating within the LAA;
- ☑ Assisted in the drafting of the inter-office MOU between OHR, OAPIA, and OLA that delineates how the two LEP outreach offices will serve as consultative bodies to DC’s Language Access Program in terms of developing, updating, and monitoring the implementation of the LAA;
- ☑ Structured, in affiliation with OAPIA, OHR, the Department of Justice, and the Multicultural Community Services--a local CBO--the first training session for LAA “covered entities”. The seminar included the participation of the language access coordinators and/or directors of the 22 agencies mandated to comply with LAA by the end of FY2006. A second training session is scheduled for the first quarter of FY2005;
- ☑ Developed a crisis response structure within OLA to facilitate the dissemination to DC Latinos of vital information, such as in the case of lead-in-the-water emergency. This information delivery structure is able to provide critical information in Spanish to the most important Latino radio, print, and television outlets; and,
- ☑ Prepared, in partnership with the Latino Economic Development Corporation, a seminar for Latino business owners. The Office of Planning, the Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration, the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, and the Department of Public Works provided informational presentations.

***Employment.*** Understanding that DC Latinos are underserved in terms of access to job opportunities and employment-related services, OLA has sought to productively engage the Department of Employment Services through the One-Stop Career Center System--a program that is operated in partnership with the DC Workforce Investment Council. By doing so, OLA has been seeking to improve access for LEP communities, and Latinos in particular, to career counseling and planning, resume assistance, direct job placement, job training, and unemployment compensation, which should, in turn, empower these individuals to achieve economic and social stability.

Some of the most important highlights for FY2004 under the area of Employment are the following:

- ☑ Represented OLA at the DCWIC’s Universal Access Committee and Latino Affairs Subcommittee;
- ☑ Contributed in the development of One-Stop Career Center System’s Business Plan, so that a full array of employment services and benefits can be delivered in a linguistically and culturally competent manner to LEP communities (e.g. Latinos);
- ☑ Proposed the inclusion of an addendum to the new Business Plan of the One-Stop Career Center System that would specifically address the needs and expectations of the LEP and disabled communities. The DCWIC agreed to espouse such an initiative. As a result, the addendum is being developed through the DCWIC’s Universal Access Committee, and it should be completed and approved by the first quarter of FY2005;
- ☑ Provided the Universal Access Committee and Latino Affairs Subcommittee with briefings on the new LAA and the probable repercussions on the delivery of employment services to LEP residents via the One-Stop Career Center System; and,
- ☑ Furnished feedback to DOES and the DCWIC about cultural and linguistic aspects that should be considered and/or amended in terms of the content that is delivered through the internet via their Virtual One-Stop Career Center.

**Housing.** Community advocates have expressed that DC Latinos, many of whom live in substandard, private multi-family rental apartments, do not have meaningful access to national or local resources that are targeted to meet the necessities of low-income households. While financially eligible for housing assistance, the difficulty Latinos face in terms of accessing affordable housing can be exacerbated by linguistic and cultural barriers. Realizing this, OLA has been supporting efforts to maintain and increase affordable housing opportunities for low income people, particularly District LEP constituents.

In partnership with the DC Housing Authority (DCHA) and OAPIA, as well as CBOs that have expertise in the area of housing, the initial steps have been taken during FY2004 to develop an innovative Linguistically-Isolated Voucher Program. This groundbreaking initiative would enable linguistically-isolated Latino and Asian DC residents to have the opportunity to receive a total of 100 DCHA Tenant-Based Housing Choice Vouchers, and thus gain access to an affordable home for their families. If the project is implemented as planned, OLA and OAPIA would serve as consultative agencies that would assist DCHA and qualified CBOs conduct outreach to inform the Latino and Asian communities about the new voucher preference and other housing assistance services offered by the DC government. Once the CBOs identify a predetermined number of prospective eligible recipients, the list would be forwarded by OLA and OAPIA to DCHA for final processing and approval.

**Public Safety.** OLA has been active in the MPD's Latino Advisory Council (LAC) which provides feedback and performance recommendations on the effectiveness of Police efforts in the Latino community, in particular the work done by the Latino Liaison Unit (LLU). This type of proactive engagement is geared toward improving public safety and creating a more positive environment between MPD and DC Latinos.

Some of the most important highlight for FY2004 under the area of Public Safety and Community-Police Relations are the following:

- ☑ Represented OLA at the MPD's Latino Advisory Council (LAC);
- ☑ Provided interpretation services for MPD's 2004 Latino Night Out Event that included the participation of Mayor Anthony A. Williams;
- ☑ Advise in how the LLU can improve "home visits." Members of the LLU organize to have a Latino family convene a meeting at their residence, where MPD officials discuss crime and safety issues with the family and their neighbors;
- ☑ Assisted the LLU in reaching out to DC Latino media outlets. To date, more than 80 Spanish-language radio presentations concerning MPD services have taken place.

#### **IV. Community Relations and Outreach Program**

This program provides partnership and outreach services to District Latino residents so that they can increase their knowledge of and access to vital programs and services available to them. While other areas of OLA are concerned with funding quality community programs and supporting systemic reform to address long-standing gaps in service delivery, the Community Relations and Outreach program remains at work within neighborhoods of high Latino concentration to deliver much needed information on DC Government programs and services.

Often, encounters with Latino constituents through OLA-sponsored events and coordinated fairs and forums with other DC agencies lead to individual cases that deserve immediate follow-up. This on-going advocacy role touches on one delicate subject experienced continually by OLA's outreach staff: the fine line between the role of a "connector" to other community and government agencies and the role of

“social case worker”. The reality is that, while OLA staff try to remain focused on the first role, they often become immersed in the unavoidable function of case worker.

Most recently, the work of OLA’s Outreach program has been heavily embedded in the Mayor’s Hot Spots Initiative. OLA submitted in June a plan that delineates support areas rendered by OLA within the framework of the Hot Spots Initiative led by the Office of the City Administrator. OLA’s work takes place by attending weekly meetings with CORE Teams from Ward 1 and Ward 4, where the majority of Latinos reside. OLA plays an active role these meetings and follows up when needed with cases involving Latino constituents. A new database, intake and tracking mechanism of constituents put into place this year reports 94 cases where OLA actively participated, some of which were taken through CORE Team meetings. Additionally, 86 cases referred to OLA by the IQ system are reported as attended and closed. Only 3 cases remained open as of September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Due to many hours of data entering and revisions, OLA was able to update information for 1,201 constituents through its database. OLA’s Outreach Program attended 287 meetings to plan, coordinate, advise or support outreach efforts to Latinos by community and government agencies. This number surpassed the original goal of 250 participations.

***Participation of Latinos in the Mayor’s Strategic Plan.*** Latino participation at the Mayor’s Citizens Summit was kept in past years under 5% of the total number of participants, in spite of the closer-to-10% representation of Latinos in the city’s total population. However, in November 2003, after many weeks of outreach and information dissemination by OLA staff, Latino participation at the Mayor’s Citizens Summit grew to a total of 11% of all participants. This important shift demonstrated the willingness of hundreds of Latinos to become more involved in the Mayor’s initiatives and the city’s civic process.

Latino representation at Neighborhood Summits in Ward 1 and Ward 4 rose to 460 Latinos. The State of the District Address and Mayoral Toy Drive in December attracted over 100 Latino individuals.

***Information Exchange Sessions:*** By using OLA’s expertise in the community, multiple government and quasi-government entities bridged relationships and collaborations with the Latino community to deliver information on any or all of OLA’s five (5) key strategic areas: education, housing, health, economic development and employment. Because information and partnerships can’t be interrupted, OLA’s Outreach Team is the most labor and time intensive within its program structure. This is reflected in the agency’s personnel budget with 5.5 of 12 approved FTEs dedicated to outreach and advocacy functions.

An estimated 2,670 people are reported as participants during OLA’s information exchange sessions this year, many of which were conducted in partnership with over a dozen government agencies, including the Emergency Management Agency, Department of Health, Department of Parks and Recreation, MPD, Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, Department of Public Works, and many others. For events organized and conducted exclusively by OLA, the number of participants this year was 1,070.

<b>OLA-Sponsored Event</b>	<b>Location - Number of Participants</b>	<b>Date</b>
Hispanic Heritage Month Family Fair and Mayoral Town Hall	Cardozo High School - 350	September 2003
OLA Christmas and Toy Drive	OLA - 100	December 2003
OLA Housing Fair	All Souls Church – 200	March 2004
OLA Youth and Education Fair	Parks and Recreation Parking Lot – 120	May 2004
Latino Emergency Preparedness Day	Meridian Park - 150	June 2004
Georgia Avenue Job Fair	Georgia and Irving Streets - 700	June 2004
DC Night Out	Columbia Rd. - 250	August 2004
Latino Family Fair	Bell Multicultural High School - 800	August 2004

## **V. Agency Management Program**

At the agency management level, FY2004 represented a complicated scenario with the introduction of the Administration Services Modernization Program (ASMP) –the management modernization plan of DC Government. Despite the limited administrative and managerial capacity of an agency of the size of OLA, and the demand for new staff to keep up quickly with the necessary knowledge of guidelines, procedures, and operations of ASMP-related systems, OLA is currently on its way for full implementation in FY2005 of ASMP and its components. OLA's highlights in the area of agency management include:

- ☑ Director and Deputy director were trained and are ready for the transition into a new state-of-the-art financial, performance management and human resources' integrated and internet-based system (ARGUS / People Soft);
- ☑ New furniture, computer equipment and network-related components have been acquired to keep up with the increasing demands of technology use and property compliance;
- ☑ In the area of communications, OLA has become the Mayor's voice and source of information for Spanish press and media. In close coordination with the Mayor's Office of Communications, press releases on critical Mayoral communications are often translated and disseminated by OLA. OLA Director and Deputy Director are interviewed on average biweekly on topics that concern important messages from the Mayor, city initiatives and new or proposed programs;
- ☑ OLA redesigned its website, which includes updated bilingual information on OLA activities and events;
- ☑ As procurement regulations have tightened, OLA's Director has become acquainted with the changes and new compliance measures for OLA contractual requirements; and,
- ☑ Protocols, procedures and policies applied to OLA staff have been strengthened by the Deputy Director and reminders occur weekly; and,
- ☑ Management has instituted permanent and weekly staff meetings that serve as a vehicle to planning, trouble shooting, team building, and mission-driven coordination among OLA programs.

## **VI. Conclusion**

Overall, OLA has fulfilled its mandate in FY2004 and successfully met or surpassed all its performance measures. Leadership is stable, and the credibility of community groups and government peers has risen. OLA has returned to become once again an effective arm of consultation for the Mayor, City Council, and government entities, while also a viable vehicle through which the Latino community and the Mayor's Latino Commission can channel policy, agency and program recommendations. OLA has been able to position itself again between the remaining needs of a largely impoverished community and the on-going efforts by Mayor Anthony Williams to put into practice systemic change in our local government. And in doing so, OLA has improved community relations, extended the Mayor's messages, and brokered discussions leading to the advancement of the District's Latino community.

As we move into FY2005, OLA's Strategic Business Plan will be strengthened and the agency is ready to take advantage of new opportunities for partnerships, dialogue, and solution-based interactions with stakeholders across community and government.